

**A TALK DELIVERED BY AZAPO DEPUTY SECRETARY FOR PUBLICITY AND INFORMATION CDE
CIKIZWA DABULA AT THE INTERNATIONAL ALD WEBINAR OF THE A-APRP'S 42ND ANNUAL
COMMEMORATION OF AFRIKAN LIBERATION DAY – 24 MAY 2022.**

Theme: The role of Women fighting for Unity and against Neo-colonialism

Thank you to the All African People's Revolutionary Party (A-APRP) for hosting this important conversation, and thank you for extending an invite to Imbeleko Women's Organisation, a women's formation of the Azanian People's Organization (AZAPO).

I bring you revolutionary greetings, from an organisation whose leaders and members refuse to sell the struggle for temporal material gains. I greet you in the names of fallen activists whose blood serves as an ultimate sacrifice for the liberation of Azania. I greet you in the names of fellow black brothers and sisters who lie as cornerstones beneath the buildings of European invaders. I greet you in the silent cries of women whose children are sold and trafficked as modern-day slaves. I also greet you with a hopeful smile; that AZANIA shall once again be ours.

The marking of this 59th Anniversary of the Afrikan Liberation Day takes place at a very tumultuous time in our country, Azania, where fellow Afrikans are at war with each other, hurting and even killing one another for mere scraps provided by descendants of colonial settlers and foreign capitalists who remain in control of our means of production. A time when the maiming and killing of young women and children is now perpetrated by Black men; this is the kind of violence and intolerance against one another that has us sitting here today in an attempt to call for a healing of the over-exploited Afrikans. It is our hope that the healing will unify Afrikans towards the fight against this inherently anti-Black neo-colonial system.

This commemorative event is a painful reminder of the severe impact of our land dispossession and the spiritual castration of Black people. What is Afrika Liberation Day for me as a landless young Black woman, with no economic power to self-determine? What is liberating about living in fear? Fear of your own people. Today we raise clinched fists in solidarity with one another and loudly chant "Amandla!" but tomorrow the same fist may be thrown at me for refusing to bow to the patriarchal forces that challenge my existence. My reality is immersed in the violence

arising from the powerlessness of my Black people, this is the violence that threatens our collective progress as a people.

This month of May also marks the anniversary of the formal adoption of the 1996 Constitution of the Republic of South Africa. This is the same constitution that is praised the-world-over for its progressiveness and advancement. One wonders how progress is measured, if the people this constitution purports to represent are landless and impoverished. In fact, it is this very same constitution that is used to perpetuate the landlessness of the majority of the citizens of this country. The European invaders made the point of ensuring that this country is governed through a constitutional democracy that favours white liberalism at the expense of (the interests) of Black people.

In attempting to speak to the role of women against neo-colonialism, allow me to borrow from the wise words of the revolutionary leader and President of Burkina Faso, the late Cde Thomas Isidore Sankara when he says:

“the revolution and women’s liberation go together. We do not talk of women’s emancipation as an act of charity or because of a surge of human compassion. It is a basic necessity for the triumph of the revolution. Women hold up the other half of the sky”.

Sankara’s counsel should be understood in the context of finding who the Black woman is in the struggle matrix and how important she is in the united fight against neo-colonialism and the fight for the true liberation of our land and all that belongs to her. History is littered with stories of triumphalism by many, a woman warrior. Our Afrikan way of life teaches us, that women are sacred ancestral beings who ought to be revered as gods. They are the portals through which life is given; not only do they birth and nurture people to humanity but they also defend them against any harm. And most importantly, they set and determine the trajectory of the futures of their nations. It was Nkrumah, when talking about the successes of their struggle who told us that

“...from the beginning women have been the chief field organisers.”

We also know of brave warriors like Mkabayi ka Jama, Yaa Asantewaa, Mbuya Nehanda and Queen Nzinga who all have been instrumental in the fight against the invasion of their nations by

the European colonialists. These warriors represent the uncontaminated character and might of black women in Afrika. These are the warriors who remind us that no revolution may be successful without the participation of women.

It is from understanding the importance of women in society that one is forced to suggest that the economic exploitation of Black women in this country and their exclusion in participation and decision making is not only myopic but remains a grave injustice.

In dismantling neo-colonialism, the first war that Black women must wage is against accepting the concept of negative reality that makes Black women view themselves as inferior victims who can neither care for nor defend themselves against any form of attack be it personal or societal. This attempt by the system to create in every Black woman a helpless, powerless being must be rejected with the disgust it deserves.

The second, perhaps most important fight should be rejecting any divisive strategy meant to drive a wedge between the Black woman and the Black man as if both are not victims of imperialism, racism and neo-colonialism. Our temporary material conditions are created such that the two remain at odds with each other (we are forced to focus on our differences and squabbles) when they are supposed to be united in the fight against the system of oppression. If we, Black people contribute knowingly and unknowingly in the persistence of this antagonistic relationship, then we must accept the inevitable death of the Black race.

Third, we must refuse to allow the system to insinuate Black women in the struggles of those who are on the side of the oppressor. Having noted the ease with which neo-colonialism as a continuum of colonialism mutates or shapeshifts, it can be understandable why Black women find resonance in certain philosophical constructs that are invented to safeguard the efforts of white women in positioning themselves for power. However well-meaning white women may be, they will never return to us our stolen land. However well-meaning they may be, they will never settle for anything less than being a boss to Black women; they will never be part of the healing and restoration of the Black family and they will never sacrifice the luxuries of their comfortable positions in the pyramid of white power. Our fundamental struggle as Black people in this overly exploited settler colony, is for the return of land to its rightful owners. We need the

convergence of the forces of our Black women and Black men to overcome this struggle, if not for ourselves then for future generations of the Black race. It is only through this convergence of our united forces as a black race that neo-colonialism can be dismantled.

Our unity must without fear or doubt, silence the arrogance of this mutating multifaceted anti-Black system. By going back in history, to find the unadulterated Black woman and man and using that as a basis upon which a new liberated being is created, we shall have succeeded in wiping away any trace of the self-mutilating Afrikan the colonialists would have created.

Camagu!